

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - MAY, 1998

There seems to be a lot of new information recently, so I thought I'd make use of this format once again.

FIRST, the library union has settled a three year retroactive contract for the fiscal years 1998, 1999 and 2000 with a 3-2-2 percent wage increase. A sixth step was also added to all classifications excepting pages. The Assistant Director was removed from the bargaining unit. My feeling on the latter is that although it is more administratively correct, it opens a Pandora's box in terms of raises for the position. I know we will again have to get Personnel Board approval for each step raise, using those old repetitive evaluation forms and a formal meeting with them, but using what pay classification? The old A-12? - and will they argue about what those old figures have or have not been raised to over the years?

SECOND, we need to do some "strategic thinking" about technology. A prominent information science professor has stated that we do not have time for "strategic planning" anymore, so, here goes: The public wants and demands PC's for Internet and word processing. It is a nightmare keeping three adult and 2 children's public stations up. Patrons are routinely misusing the PC's. All three adult PC's are SELDOM working simultaneously. We are calling our hardware insurer more often, and seeing David the Town troubleshooter occasionally, also. His part time morning schedule is often at odds with ours. If town meeting approves the expansion of this position to full time, perhaps that situation may improve. The hard fact, however, is that few technicians can cope with the multifaceted set up that the library has with NOBLE, its periodical service vendor EBSCO, the various security programs we have installed, etc. That's today. Soon the State (through the Board of Library Commissioners) and the Region (through NMRLS) will be mounting new services. Not to mention the five or six new PC's and new system we will probably get in December. We could use our own Information Systems Librarian. As it is, Technical Services Librarian Rich spends too much time troubleshooting. I have suggested that:

- 1) Staff (usually Rich) spend only 30 or so minutes in diagnoses and then call our hardware insurer¹
 - 2) Changing the PC Use Policy is probably futile - people do NOT read notices. I would for one that reads, "Don't _____, don't _____, don't _____, and don't _____."
 - 3) Consider adding a port or 2 (see Agenda)
 - 3) Start thinking of ways to justify additional costs of the proposed **NOBLE PC Support Grant**. This is the second of the two grants submitted by **NOBLE** this year. (The first is the \$600,000.00 system upgrade grant request) My understanding is that it will be a **menu** item on the **NOBLE** budget - those that want it pay for it and those that don't, won't. This is help we would benefit from - he/she would be trained to deal with the specialized hardware and software in **NOBLE** libraries.
- **REMEMBER - THERE WILL BE 10 MORE PC's (replacing existing dumb terminals) to maintain**

¹In many cases the staff has been working at cross purposes, e.g., my philosophy has been to call the Town Troubleshooter first to rule out software, other staff's philosophy has been to call the hardware insurer to rule out hardware first before calling in the software guys, some staff look the other way take little or no responsibility for resolving malfunctions. The public gets the bad end of the deal here as equipment stays broken. The we hear about it.

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THIRD, we all await the news on the **NOBLE** System Upgrade grant. A missing document (Cooperative Collection Development) that should have been on file at the Board of Library Commissioners has taken up much time and attention. The one that the BLC wants is not the one anyone else wants to agree to, yet we found it was their way or no way as far as the System Upgrade grant goes.

→ We need to consider the possibility that **NOBLE** will *not get the grant* as a bigger and needier system seems to have been given an edge over **NOBLE**.

→ **What do we do with the PC purchase article then?**

FOURTH - two items that the Town has effectively blocked: 1) the Museum - although not on the Agenda, perhaps the Board should hold a funeral for this idea, whose time does not seem to be coming. 2) I had more luck aggressively pushing Gina at the negotiating session May 7th about changing the Secretary/Bookkeeper's position to Administrative Assistant and prorating the part time (19 hours) pay at the former full time CL-2 (now L-2) rate. I kept at her and, although she was extremely aggravated, I got some answers out of her and Attorney Greenspan. He said, "We do have the right to reorganize" - the Selectmen can create a position, we advertise and hire the existing employee, of course. The Union can then protest it or not. (It was not on the list of "table" items during the final negotiating session. I had asked if it was and if not, why not, and if still not how can we do it.)

→ **We have a meeting with the Selectmen to discuss this JUNE 15th.
Time to be announced.**